

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A ventilated cage and rack system for housing at least one cage assembly, said system comprising:

a ventilated rack having a height, a width and a depth, wherein the rack is constructed and arranged to support a plurality of cages along the width of the rack, the rack including at least one air exhaust plenum running along the width of the rack; and

at least one canopy supported by said rack, the canopy having a length and a width, the canopy being adapted to receive one or more cage assemblies below the canopy while maintaining a gap between the canopy and the top of said cage assembly so as to permit air to be drawn into the air exhaust plenum from the interior of said cage assembly through the top of said cage assembly and to also permit ambient air to be drawn across the top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum;

wherein said cage assembly comprises at least one of a first cage having a first width at or about the width of the canopy or a plurality of second cages having at least a second width, said second width being less than said first width, wherein the combined widths of the second cages positioned side by side along the width of the canopy is at or about the width of the canopy;

wherein the canopy further comprises a channeling element adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum when said cage assembly comprises a plurality of said second cages, the canopy also including a rear channel wall disposed adjacent said channeling element and adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum when said cage assembly comprises a plurality of said second cages.

2. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 1, wherein said plurality of second cages consists of two second cages.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 2, wherein said canopy comprises a channeling element adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum when said cage assembly consists of two cages.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 4, wherein said canopy further comprises a rear channel wall disposed adjacent said channeling element and adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum when said cage assembly consists of two second cages.

7. (Currently Amended) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 5~~1~~, wherein said canopy further comprises one or more flow tabs disposed at a rear edge of said canopy, said one or more flow tabs being adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum when said cage assembly comprises a plurality of said second cages.

8. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 6, wherein said canopy further comprises one or more flow tabs disposed at a rear edge of said canopy, said one or more flow tabs being adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum when said cage assembly consists of two cages.

9. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 2, wherein each of said two second cages are secured within said ventilated rack by a corresponding cage lock, said cage locks being disposed on said ventilated rack such that said cage locks are disposed about non-adjacent sides of said cages.

10. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 1, wherein said canopy comprises a discrete reinforcement member disposed on a front edge of said canopy.

11. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 1, wherein said canopy is attached to said air exhaust plenum and communicates with said air exhaust plenum through ducts in said air exhaust plenum.

12. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 1, wherein said rack further comprises at least one air supply plenum and wherein said canopy positions said cage assembly to receive air from said air supply plenum.

13. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 1, wherein said canopy further comprises a top plate, a left side wall and a right side wall.

14. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 13, wherein the top and side plates are of substantially the same length as the length of said cage assembly in the rack.

15. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 13, wherein each of said side walls is substantially perpendicular to the top plate.

16. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 13, wherein said top plate and said left and right side walls are formed as a unitary member.

17. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 13, wherein each said cage of said cage assembly further comprises a bottom portion with side walls and a filter cap, the filter cap having side walls which overhang the side walls of the bottom portion of the cage when the filter cap is mounted on the bottom portion, and wherein each of said left and right side walls of the canopy further comprise a lip extending perpendicularly from the side plate so that the lips extend underneath at least a portion of the overhanging side walls of the filter cap of the second cage.

18. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 1, wherein said at least one canopy is substantially comprised of a transparent material.

19. (Original) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 1, wherein said at least one canopy is substantially comprised of clear plastic.

20. (Currently Amended) A ventilated rack for housing cages having different widths, said system comprising:

a ventilated rack having a height, a width and a depth, wherein the rack is constructed and arranged to position a plurality of cages along the width of the rack, the rack including at least one air exhaust plenum running along the width of the rack; and
one or more canopies supported by said rack, the canopies having a length and width, at least one of said canopies being adapted to receive either one of a first cage or two of a second cage below the canopy so as to permit air to be drawn into the air exhaust plenum from the interior of each cage, the first cage having a first width at or about the width of the canopy, and the second cage having a second width, wherein the combined widths of two second cages positioned side by side along the width of the canopy is at or about the width of the canopy;

wherein said at least one of said canopies is adapted such that ambient air is drawn across the top of said cages into the air exhaust plenum, the at least one canopies further comprising a rear channel wall disposed adjacent said

channeling element and adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air
across said top of said cages.

21. (Original) The rack of claim 20, wherein said at least one of said canopies is adapted such that a gap is maintained between the top of the cages so as to permit air to be drawn into the air exhaust plenum from the interior of said cages.

22-23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) The rack of claim ~~22~~20, wherein said at least one of said canopies comprises a channeling element adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cages.

25. (Currently Amended) The rack of claim ~~22~~20, wherein said at least one of said canopies further comprises one or more flow tabs disposed at a rear edge of said canopy, said one or more flow tabs being adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cages.

26. (Currently Amended) The rack of claim ~~22~~20, wherein each of said cages are secured within said ventilated rack by a corresponding cage lock, said cage locks being disposed on said rack such that said cage locks are disposed about non-adjacent sides of said cages.

27. (Currently Amended) The rack of claim 2220, wherein said at least one of said canopies comprises a discrete reinforcement member disposed on a front edge of said canopy.

28. (Currently Amended) The rack of claim 2220, wherein said at least one of said canopies is attached to said air exhaust plenum and communicates with said air exhaust plenum through ducts in said air exhaust plenum.

29. (Currently Amended) The rack of claim 2220, wherein said rack further comprises at least one air supply plenum and wherein said at least one of said canopies positions said cages to receive air from said air supply plenum.

30. (Currently Amended) The rack of claim 2220, wherein said at least one of said canopies further comprises a top plate, a left side wall and a right side wall.

31. (Original) The rack of claim 30, wherein the top and side plates are of substantially the same length as the length of said cage assembly in the rack.

32. (Original) The rack of claim 30, wherein each of said side walls is substantially perpendicular to the top plate.

33. (Original) The rack of claim 30, wherein said top plate and said left and right side walls are formed as a unitary member.

34. (Original) The rack of claim 20, wherein said at least one canopy is substantially comprised of a transparent material.

35. (Original) The rack of claim 20, wherein said at least one canopy is substantially comprised of clear plastic.

36. (Original) The rack of claim 30, wherein each said cages further comprises a bottom portion with side walls and a filter cap, the filter cap having side walls which overhang the side walls of the bottom portion of the cage when the filter cap is mounted on the bottom portion, and wherein each of said left and right side walls of said at least one of said canopies further comprises a lip extending perpendicularly from the side plate so that the lips extend underneath at least a portion of the overhanging side walls of the filter cap of the cages.

37-66. (Canceled)

67. (Currently Amended) A ventilated cage and rack system for housing at least one cage assembly, said system comprising:

a ventilated rack having a height, a width and a depth, wherein the rack is

constructed and arranged to support a plurality of canopies, the rack including at least one air exhaust plenum running along the width of the rack;

a plurality of canopies supported by said rack, each canopy having a length and a width, the width being defined by at least two side plates, the canopy being adapted to receive one or more cage assemblies between the side plates below the canopy, such that a gap exists between the canopy and the top of said cage assembly so as to permit air to be drawn into the air exhaust plenum from the interior of said cage assembly through the top of

said cage assembly and to also permit ambient air to be drawn across the top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum;

wherein said cage assembly comprises at least one of a first cage having a first width at or about the width of the canopy or a plurality of second cages having at least a second width, said second width being less than said first width, wherein the combined widths of the second cages positioned side by side along the width of the canopy is at or about the width of the canopy;

.wherein the plurality of canopies further comprise a channeling element adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum when said cage assembly comprises a plurality of said second cages, the canopy also including a rear channel wall disposed adjacent said channeling element and adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum when said cage assembly comprises a plurality of said second cages.

68. (New) A ventilated cage and rack system for housing at least one cage assembly, said system comprising:

a ventilated rack having a height, a width and a depth, wherein the rack is constructed and arranged to support a plurality of cages along the width of

the rack, the rack including at least one air exhaust plenum running along the width of the rack; and

at least one canopy supported by said rack, the canopy having a length and a width, the canopy being adapted to receive one or more cage assemblies below the canopy while maintaining a gap between the canopy and the top of said cage assembly so as to permit air to be drawn into the air exhaust plenum from the interior of said cage assembly through the top of said cage assembly and to also permit ambient air to be drawn across the top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum;

wherein said cage assembly comprises at least one of a first cage having a first width at or about the width of the canopy or two second cages having at least a second width, said second width being less than said first width, wherein the combined widths of the second cages positioned side by side along the width of the canopy is at or about the width of the canopy.

wherein said canopy comprises a channeling element adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum when said cage assembly consists of two cages, the said canopy further comprising a rear channel wall disposed adjacent said channeling element and adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum when said cage assembly consists of two second cages.

69. (New) The ventilated cage and rack system of claim 68, wherein said canopy further comprises one or more flow tabs disposed at a rear edge of said canopy, said one or more flow tabs being adapted to facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cage assembly into the air exhaust plenum when said cage assembly consists of two cages.

70. (New) A ventilated rack for housing cages having different widths, said system comprising:

a ventilated rack having a height, a width and a depth, wherein the rack is constructed and arranged to position a plurality of cages along the width of the rack, the rack including at least one air exhaust plenum running along the width of the rack; and

one or more canopies supported by said rack, the canopies having a length and width, at least one of said canopies being adapted to receive either one of a first cage or two of a second cage below the canopy so as to permit air to be drawn into the air exhaust plenum from the interior of each cage, the first cage having a first width at or about the width of the canopy, and the second cage having a second width, wherein the combined widths of two second cages positioned side by side along the width of the canopy is at or about the width of the canopy;

wherein said at least one of said canopies is adapted such that ambient air is drawn across the top of said cages into the air exhaust plenum, said at least one of said canopies further comprising one or more flow tabs disposed at

a rear edge of said canopy, said one or more flow tabs being adapted to
facilitate said drawing of ambient air across said top of said cages.